

## **Abstract**

A method for assisting a user with procurement decisions, sourcing decisions and strategic sourcing decisions in an enterprise is disclosed. The method implements a plurality of software modules in a logical workflow process based on the results of integrating and analyzing data. The workflow process provides a plurality of steps for discovering data, analyzing data, alerting the user about the data, recommending actions to the user based on the data, and executing those actions. The workflow process is based on a Value Chain Intelligence (VCI) system, which integrates and analyzes internal data from enterprises and external data from suppliers, catalogs, and marketplaces in real time for their impact on supply chains processes. Components for such a system may consist of internal data collection components, external data collection components, data integration components, and data application components. Various methods for searching, extracting, transforming, integrating, analyzing, and representing data internal to an enterprise and data external to an enterprise are also disclosed.